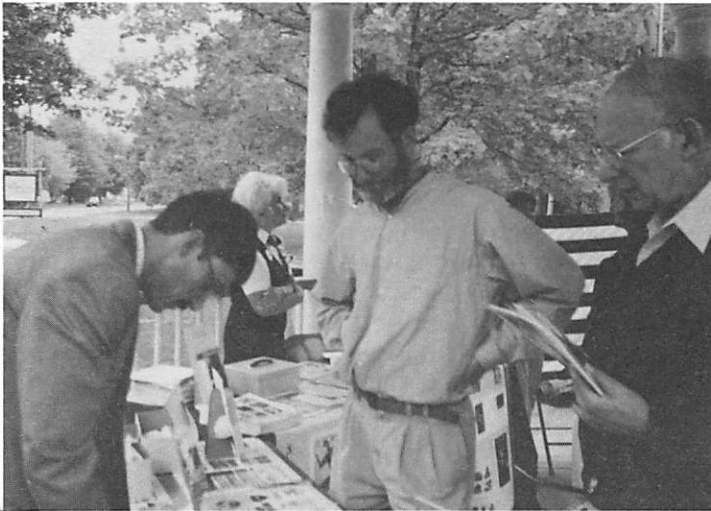


The Bethel Courier.

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BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Bethel Postmaster Norman Milliard (left) hand cancels at the Bethel Gazebo one of the special bicentennial commemorative envelopes for Society member Jonathan Goldberg (center) while his father Leon Goldberg waits his turn during the festivities on Incorporation Day, June 10, 1996.

1796: A SPECIAL YEAR IN BETHEL'S PAST

The town we now call Bethel began as Sudbury Canada in 1768. It was granted to recognize the services of soldiers who fought in one of several abortive campaigns by Puritan Massachusetts to conquer the territory to the north dominated by French Catholics commonly called Canada. Located in the then District of Maine, it was called by that name since soldiers from Sudbury, Massachusetts had participated unsuccessfully in the campaign of 1690 to bring these scattered settlements to the north and east under the control of the Commonwealth. None of the original grantees ever saw this land or settled here since the grant was finally made so long after the service rendered.

Although there is some evidence that some men and boys were here for short times prior to that date, the year 1774 is generally given as the date of the first settlement. In any case, the War for American Independence was soon underway and severely restricted settlement. Adding to the woes was the fact the British were paying Indians to disrupt these outlying frontier settlements.

This fact was dramatically illustrated with the attack on Sudbury Canada in 1781, in what has been ever since known as "New England's Last Indian Raid." During that

(continued on page 2)

THE BETHEL SOLDIERS OF '61

From the pages of the Oxford Democrat, 16 July 1886, compiled by Judge C.W. Whitman of Norway

Gen. Pope in his official report of the Second Bull Run battle says of Gen. Grover's charge: "In attack Grover's Brigade of Hooker's Division was particularly distinguished by a determined bayonet charge breaking two of the enemy's lines and penetrating to the third before it could be checked."

The reason why the command to charge the enemy's line was given is stated in Greely's American Conflict to be that Pope hearing that McDowell had arrived on the field had ordered Fitz-John Porter to go into action on the enemy's right and supposing this order had directed an attack in front by the corps to which Grover's Brigade belonged and Reno's Corps.

In this disastrous battle fell the gifted and witty son of the Great Expounder of the Constitution, Fletcher Webster, Colonel of the 12th Mass. Regt., but the greatest sacrifices of the whole campaign was the loss of Gen. Phillip Kearney.

His last charge was in the midst of a storm and darkness when placing the reins between his teeth and grasping in his single hand sword he led his men in the attack from which the foe recoiled and though he lost his life our line of retreat toward Washington and Alexandria was secured. Thus fell "the bravest of the brave." Mourned by the Army and the country his memory will be cherished as long as exalted patriotism, inspiring courage and justice toward men shall be revered by mankind. Of him it can truly be said of Bayard, "He was a knight without fear and without reproach."

When Gen. Banks superseded Gen. Butler in command of the Department of the Gulf, in the autumn of 1862, he asked the War Department to assign Gen. Cuvier Grover to his command, which request was granted. The forces of Gen. Banks, numbering about 30,000 troops were designated as the "Nineteenth Army Corps" and Gen. Grover was placed in command of one of its divisions and on the 18th of December 1862 he was sent with 10,000 men to reoccupy Baton Rouge, which had been given up to the Rebels. It was taken without a struggle.

Early in the spring, Gen. Grover's Division was sent by transport up the Atchafalaya River and Grand Lake to a place called the Irish Bend where a landing was effected with considerable difficulty on account of the shallow water. Here he was vigorously attacked but he held his ground and drove off the enemy under Gen. Dick Taylor,

(continued on page 2)

(1796: A Special Year, continued from page 1)

deeply unsettling event, two settlers were taken prisoner and marched off to Canada where they spent the remaining eighteen months of the war in a Quebec prison. Frightened by this turn of events, citizens of Sudbury Canada demanded military protection against further incursions of this sort. The General Court of Massachusetts responded by providing for the building of two forts, one in each parish. These precautions proved unnecessary, but few can imagine today how this event terrified these early inhabitants, causing several to move elsewhere.

Following the end of hostilities, farmers looking for good land were lured to the rich intervalles surrounding the Androscoggin River. Population grew rapidly until by the mid-1790s there were more than 300 residents.

Early in 1796, the inhabitants petitioned the General Court to incorporate the town. The question of a name was finally settled when Rev. Eliphaz Chapman (1750-1814) suggested the name Bethel from the Book of Genesis (Chapter 28, Verse 19) from the Hebrew word being "House of God."

The legislation incorporating the town passed both houses of the Massachusetts Legislature and was signed by the Governor on June 10, 1796. Bethel became the 107th town in the District of Maine. Benjamin Russell (1739-1802), a Justice of Peace, was designated by the incorporation legislation as authorized and empowered to call the first town meeting for the purpose of setting up the first town government.

On July 23, 1796, citizens were officially warned that a town meeting would be held on August 15, 1796 at the farm of Amos Hastings (1757-1829) and officers would be elected for the first time. The meeting was held in the Hastings house or barn (accounts differ) at Middle Intervale (just upriver from the Carter farm and now the site of corn field). Both Hastings and Russell had come from Fryeburg to Sudbury Canada with their wives in 1779.

Elected selectmen were John Kilgore, Jonathan Bartlett, and Jonathan Clark. Benjamin Russell was selected as town clerk. As was the custom of the time, those men married within the year were bestowed the office of Hogreeve for the new town.

(The Bethel Soldiers of '61, continued from page 1)

who retreated on Opelousas. Every place of importance was taken and one after the other by our forces and finally the demoralized Rebels fell back to Shreveport, and nearly all of the Red River country was recovered. Taylor had lost heavily by deserters and stagglings and was unable to take the field again for weeks. Two thousand prisoners and twenty-two guns had been captured and two Rebel steamers had been seized and eight destroyed.

Having rendered the enemy harmless in his front Gen. Banks turned his attention to the investment of Port Hudson, which with Vicksburg already besieged by Gen. Grant constituted the main grip by the Rebels of the Mississippi River. With Gens. Grover, Weitzel and Dwight, Gen. Banks attacked the Rebel forces on the north of the fort while Gen. Augur with 3500 troops invested it on the south. The Rebel Gen. Gardner in order to prevent the

junction of our troops had sent a force to attack Augur while on the march but it was beaten and the Union forces on the North having after a sharp fight driven the Rebels within their outer line the place was completely invested except on the riverside. In two days, a grand assault was made all along the line but it was unsuccessful though ground taken and held on both flanks. On the tenth of June there was another assault where more ground was recovered on our right under Grover and Weitzel. Still the besiegers worked on and Vicksburg having surrendered the white flag was run up inside the rebel entrenchment's July 8 and the last stronghold of the enemy on the Mississippi fell. It was most successful campaign and no Union officer did more to make it so than Cuvier Grover.

While the siege of Port Hudson was in progress, Gen. Dick Taylor was busily engaged in collecting troops and occupying the places which had necessarily been vacated by the Union forces. He made a descent on Brashear Cith which he took with 1000 prisoners, 10 heavy guns, and small arms, tents, equipment and supplies valued at \$2,000,000, besides thousands of Negroes who had been liberated by Gen. Banks' advance were captured and consigned to a worse slavery than that from which they had so recently escaped. The road to New Orleans was open but the Rebels were too weak to try the experiment of taking it for Admiral Faragut with his gunboats patrolled the river. The siege of Port Hudson was not raised by this movement of the enemy, and that place having been taken Gen. Taylor next received the attention of Gen. Banks and that wiley Rebel chieftan hastily retreated up the Red River.

During the disastrous campaign on the Red River which followed it was found necessary to make Alexandria a depot for supplies which could not be carried farther and Gen. Grover with 3000 men was left to garrison the place, and soon after that campaign the Nineteenth Army Corps was transferred to the north during Grant's movement against Richmond and it became a part of Gen. Sheridan's army in the Shenandoah Valley.

(to be continued in the next issue)

EDITOR'S CORNER

During the past few years, I have served as chairman of Bethel's Bicentennial Committee. From a committee of one appointed by the Board of Selectmen, it has grown to involve the whole community. What a remarkable experience it has been and I have been extremely pleased with all the outstanding volunteers who have made this year such a special and memorable one.

As a descendant of Amos Hastings on whose farm the first town meeting was held at Middle Intervale and of Benjamin Russell Sr., the Justice of Peace and later first Town Clerk, who was authorized by the Massachusetts Legislature to call that first town meeting two hundred years ago, (plus several other town founders who played a less prominent role), I felt a special responsibility to make certain that every effort was made to honor all town founders with an appropriate observance. I believe we are achieving that goal and trust that many residents and visitors to the town will have a better idea of our past as we move forward into Bethel's third century.

SRH

REFLECTIONS OF A HALF CENTURY

(continued from the last issue)

by L.E. Davis

I believe that our personal things were the biggest loss as they were things we had acquired through the years. Pictures, photographs of the family, some nice old furniture, a small coin collection, a few old guns, and the numerous things that people have that they like and have kept, although they don't have much actual value, yet their sentimental value is important to the people who own them.

We moved in with Richard and Rita temporarily until we could find a place to live that we could get. Within two weeks, Hugh and Alma Thurston offered us the old Harry Hastings house [now site of Creative Management in 1996] which they owned, which is at the corner of Main and Vernon streets opposite Bryant's Market [1996 now Key Bank]. This house was partly furnished (enough to live in) but needed a bathroom as it only had the old fashioned toilet in the woodshed which had been condemned for use. About this same time Gould Academy had decided to have the old Holden Hall, (which was originally the Wiley house and stable) torn down and disposed of. This was a thirty room building in addition to the big kitchen and dining room. I bought this of the trustees for \$1 on the agreement that I have it torn down and rubbish removed within one year.

This building had four pretty old bathroom outfits in it, plus one which was modern. I had this good bathroom outfit installed in the Thurston's house and we moved in about five weeks after our house burned.

Our next problem was to get something underway for a planing mill to take care of the newly sawed lumber when it was dry. Fritz Tyler owned the old Bethel corn canning establishment which was located on Cross Street just north of the railway tracks and I rented the easterly end of the old shipping building from him. I paid him \$20 per month for the use of it and took care of all my own alterations of being at the end of a railroad siding which we extended so that we planed directly into a car.

It had one disadvantage in that we had to haul away all the shavings that we made and dump them into the river. All of our planing mill machinery had been destroyed in the fire so I had to find some used machinery that I could buy until I could get delivery on new, as this was still during the war and deliveries on new machinery was very slow. I was able to get an old Rogers planer over in New Hampshire for \$150 and I bought a used resaw and trimmer from Walter Matthews in Turner for \$1400 and rebuilt the blower which went through the fire, so about July 5th or 6th, around seven weeks after the fire I was in business again. I replaced the old Rogers planer with a #8 Newman as soon as I could get delivery which was in January of 1945. This was shipped by motor freight to Boston from Greensboro, NC and we brought it from there with our own truck.

Due to the shortage of copper caused by World War II, electric motors and heavy wiring were very scarce and restricted, and could be bought only by a certificate of war necessity which meant a great deal of red tape and delay. In this situation, two junk dealer firms in Lewiston, Maine, Issac Miller & Co. and Max Miller Co. gave me a great deal of help, and at a very reasonable price. By turning over to

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This issue celebrates Bethel's bicentennial observance which is being observed during the entire year. Through a series of celebrations, encampments, exhibits and special programs, there is much for everyone to enjoy and ponder as we observe this milestone in our town's history.

The Society has been an essential part of this year-long celebration with all its monthly programs tied in some way to Bethel's history. We have also hosted exhibits and events, sponsored lectures, and provided support services.

This column will mark my last as president of the Society as I have served the constitutional limit of three years. It has been a pleasure to be your president and I wish to thank all those who helped me and the Society during this time.

Charles F. Raymond

IN MEMORIAM

Died, 3 July 1996, David H. Robinson, Yarmouthport, MA, Senior Member

Died, 4 July 1996, Ruby Emery, Bryant Pond, Senior Member

Died, 4 August 1996, Althea Chase Gould Noyes, Falmouth, Life Member

Died, 16 August 1996, Ernest Perkins, Bethel, Life Member

SOCIETY LAUNCHES 1996 ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

The 1996 Annual Fund Campaign is chaired this year by Margaret Joy Tibbetts, former longtime Society board chairman, following the retirement of Howard Cole, who had headed the campaign for the past 15 years. Each year over three hundred members and friends make tax deductible donations to help the Society balance its budget by contributing between \$8000 to \$10,000. Contributions are welcomed in all amounts and may be made in honor of or in memory of someone special. Those wishing to make a donation should send it to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217-0012.

(Reflections)

them the old salvaged copper from the motors and wiring destroyed in the fire, they were able to find new material for me to use.

That year of 1944 was probably one of the busiest of my life as we were getting this planing outfit set up and going, and at the same time tearing down the old boy's dormitory and salvaging the material from it to use in building a new house for ourselves. We didn't start the actual building of the house until the spring of 1945, but cleaned up the old rubbish and got the foundation ready during the summer of 1944. We started the building of the new house in

(continued on page 4)

SOCIETY SALES DEPARTMENT

The Society maintains a selection of modestly priced gifts and historical publications. They may be ordered at the prices listed below. Maine residents must include 6% sales tax. Orders under \$10 should include \$1 for postage and handling; those over \$10 but under \$20 should include \$2 and all those over \$20 should add \$3 to cover mailing expenses.

Moses Mason House Tile \$3.50

Stationery (package of ten sheets and ten envelopes) \$2 each (Moses Mason House, Bethel Railroad Station, Summer House, Bethel Covered Bridge)

Booklets (The Family Farm, Made in Bethel) 75 cents each

Dr. Moses Mason and His House \$1

Molly Ockett \$2

Maps and Atlases

1880 Map of Bethel Hill \$2

1880 Map of Town of Bethel \$2

1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel Hill \$1

1858 Atlas of Oxford County \$7.50

T-Shirts

Moses Mason Museum (Adult, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Moses Mason Museum (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$7

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Adults, S, M, L, XL) \$8

Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 (Child, 4-6-8-10-12-14) \$8

Post Cards: Dr. Moses Mason, Agnes Mason, Moses Mason House 10 cents each

Tote Bags (Moses Mason Museum logo) small \$7.50 large \$11.50

Placemats, 4 season, set of four Bethel scenes \$7.50

Books

Carrie Wight, *A History of Newry* \$5

Bethel, *Maine Cemeteries* \$9.50

Russell, *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* \$15.95

Little, *American Decorative Wall Painting 1700-1850* \$9.95

Crosby, *From an Old Leather Trunk* \$5

Lapham, *History of Woodstock, Maine* \$19.95

Maine the Pine State: From Prehistory to the Present \$29.95

Bennett, *The White Mountains* \$14.99

Wight, *Wild River Wilderness* \$5

Parkman, *The Gould Academy Story* \$7.50

Maine in the Early Republic \$29.95

Hubka, *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn: The Connected Farm Buildings of New England* \$22.95

Bennett, *Bethel, Maine: An Illustrated History* \$39.95

Crosby, *I Was A Summer Boarder* \$5

Eva Bean, *East Bethel Road* \$50

Bennett, *Oxford County Maine: A Guide to Its Historic Architecture* \$18

Lapham, *History of Bethel, Maine, 1768-1890* \$45

Shirrefs, *The Richardson Lakes* Quality Paperback \$29.95 Cloth \$39.95

Members of the Bethel Historical Society are entitled to a 10% discount for purchases totaling \$10 or more. Please send orders to the Society at P.O. Box 12, Bethel, ME 04217-0012. If the items you ordered are in stock, they will be sent by return mail. For further information, please call toll free 1-800-824-2910.

(Reflections, continued from page 3)

April 1945 and I hired Willis Ward to build the foundation of cement and cement block. When this was done, Herbert Swan took charge of the carpenter work and Bill Ward helped him. The framework and boarding of the walls and floors and ceiling was material salvaged from the old dormitory, but we used new timbers for the roof. All of the roughed in plumbing and much of the electrical wiring and switches as well as the water piping was also salvaged material. Herbert and Bill had some other work for that summer which was promised in advance of mine so the house wasn't finished until sometime in the winter or early spring of 1946. There was also the matter of furnishing it and we finally moved in June 1946.

I will go back a little and pick up another side of this story. During the three or four years just prior to 1945, Marie had suffered some quite serious sick spells and during 1945 and early 1946 they appeared to occur oftener and be more severe, so in December 1945 we decided to take a winter vacation if we could arrange it. World War II had just ended so restrictions were lifted.

Right after the end of World War II in 1945, amateur and private aviation became very active and every little community developed a landing field and a lot of folks started learning to fly and there were many who wanted to be taken up for ride in the air and willing to pay for it. Bethel was no exception and some of the Bethel young men were going to Berlin, NH to take flying lessons. One of these was Richard, who got his private pilot's license in the late summer of 1945.

It was also during the summer of 1945 that I had an unexpected bit of extra cash come my way. When the E.L. Tebbetts Spool Co. went into receivership in 1933, the creditors accepted preferred stock in the reorganized company. As mentioned previously in this account, I was one of their creditors in the amount of about \$6400 and during the summer of 1945 the creditors were offered an amount of one half of their original credit in full settlement of the account, which was accepted in full settlement of the account, which was accepted and the Company was taken over by the Ecko. Corp. of Chicago. By this time I had gotten to expect that we might never get a settlement of this account so it was more or less like an inheritance.

On this basis I gave half of it to Marie to use in furnishing the new house and the other half, Richard and I decided to use in buying an airplane.

Richard found Piper J5 at Roland Maheau's Airport in Auburn which seemed to be a good trade and we bought it. This was used 3-place Piper plane with fabric covering, dual control, and a Lycoming 75 H.P. motor.

I believe we paid \$1795 for it.

During that summer of 1945 he flew it from various fields around Bethel, down on the meadow by the old Peterkin barn just south of the railroad, also from one of the intervalle fields on the O.R. Stanley farm, but he kept it at Berlin Airport in Milan, NH most of the time. In the meantime all of the local air enthusiasts were working to get a good, dry, year-round landing strip in Bethel and persuaded Fred L. Edwards that he had the ideal location on the Northwest Bethel Road, just north of the Riverside Cemetery property.

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Mr. Edwards very generously offered to deed about 200 acres of this cut over land to a local organization which would develop and maintain it for that purpose, reserving to himself and his heirs and assigns all the timber stumpage for a period of ten years.

For this purpose, the Bethel Airport Corporation was formed and the deed to the land was transferred to it on September 19, 1945. The actual landing strip was laid out on about 15 or 20 acres near the Northwest Bethel Road and this was cleared of trees and brush by local volunteer labor. By the middle of October enough stock had been sold and money collected so that we decided to start clearing out the stumps and grading the area.

There was a total of 421 shares of the Bethel Airport Corporation sold and paid for at \$10 per share. With this amount of \$421 available we were able to clear and grade a strip 300 feet wide by about 2000 feet long and take care of the other organizational expenses, so that in the latter part of November 1945, Richard Davis with me as passenger made the first landing on that field with our Piper J5 Cruiser, which we flew in from Berlin, NH. It was quite a thrill but also a little scary as it was almost dark, being late in the afternoon and the ground was still somewhat soft and loose. One other point that should not be overlooked in this story is the fact that Henry Boyker also gave to the Airport Corporation a narrow strip of land off the side of the old Bethel Fairground lot which he owned. This added valuable length to the runway, while on the other end, Charles Valentine gave us permission to cut down tall trees to reduce the hazard on take offs and landings.

While in Florida during the winter of 1945-46, I decided to take flying lessons. In January of 1946, I went down to the airport in St. Petersburg and signed up for flying lessons and from that time until early March I put in quite a bit of almost every weekday at that project. After awhile I took a part time job at the flight shack tending the desk for about two or three hours a day and took my pay in extra flying instruction. With quite a lot of my time tied up, Marie decided to find something extra to do and went to work part time at Lerner's Dress Shop as a saleslady, which she enjoyed very much.

It took me a little longer than the average student to qualify for my solo permit, probably because of my age as I was 53 years old when I undertook this project. The average time for a student to qualify for solo flight is about 8 hours and I had about 9 1/2 hours before they decided to let me take it alone.

I believe that no pilot ever forgets the sensation of that first solo flight. The airplane feels so much lighter without the weight of the instructor and immediately after take-off alone you begin to realize that you have to bring it in all by yourself, and that you have no instructor to help you. After flying around for a little while you decide that the time has come to try it and when you finally have made a landing and rolled to a stop there is nothing quite like the mixed feeling of relief and confidence that you have.

After that I got in my required 40 hours of time and passed my private pilot's test on March 16, 1946.

Marie got through on her job at Lerner's Dress Shop about this time and after two or three or more days of vacation we came back to Bethel.



Grace McKivergan

MEMBER PROFILE

Grace Simmons McKivergan

Born in Little Compton, RI, the daughter of Ernest and Imelda Theriault Simmons, Grace McKivergan graduated from J.F. Wilbur High School in Rhode Island, and Boston University and Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts. She married David McKivergan and they are the parents of four children and have two grandchildren. Both she and her husband were teachers for twenty-five years. During her years in Rhode Island, she was a guide at the Little Compton Historical Society from 1975 to 1987 and during that time acquired her present hobby/occupation of spinning and weaving.

Moving to Maine in 1988, she and her husband operated a bed and breakfast (Abbotts Mill Farm) for eight years. They have now closed that venture and spend their time traveling about the Canadian Maritimes and on the Carolina coast.

For the past six years, Grace has been a guide in the Dr. Moses Mason Museum, and demonstrates weaving and spinning at special events, including Sudbury Canada Days and this year's Bethel Bicentennial Weekend. She restored a small loom in the Society's collection, which is now in working order and can be used in the work room of the museum.

(Reflections)

While we were away, Dale Thurston had gotten married and moved into the house on the corner of Vernon [and Main] so Marie and I stayed with Ida Packard at the apartment she occupied upstairs in the house on Vernon Street between Greenleaf's and Mrs. Henry Austin's until our new house was ready for occupancy about June 1. During the winter in Florida, Marie had suffered quite a number of very painful sick spells and her doctor had decided gall stones were the cause. Dr. Harry Wilson rec-

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(Reflections, continued from page 5)

ommended an operation as soon as she was able to go to the hospital. Two days after we moved into the new house on the Middle Intervale Road I took her to the Bath Memorial Hospital at Bath, ME, and she had several gall stones removed from her gall bladder and had the whole system drained; this was a three or four week process, but it proved to be a successful solution for her painful sick spells.

During this summer of 1946, enthusiasm for amateur flying was still pretty high and there seemed to be demand for flying instruction so I bought a new Aeronca Champion 2-place tandem plane with dual controls, and Guy Swan, Jr. had saved money enough to buy himself a Hew Piper J3 which was a very similar airplane.

The price of these planes at that time was about \$2250 Flyaway at the factory. Richard went with Guy Jr. to PA and flew his plane back to Bethel and I hired Edwin Brown who had recently gotten his private license to Middletown, Ohio, Aeronca factory to fly the one I bought back to Bethel. We made arrangements for a flight instructor to come to Bethel on certain days of the week to teach flying to anyone who wanted to learn and a few local people took some lessons but did not keep at it steadily enough to make it pay.

Ernest Blake, Warren Blake, Connie Philbrick Thurston, Jean Fall, Freeman Merrill, Jr., Addison Saunders, Harold Nutting and possibly a few more all took some lessons but all except Harold Nutting and Guy Swan, Jr. dropped out as active students.

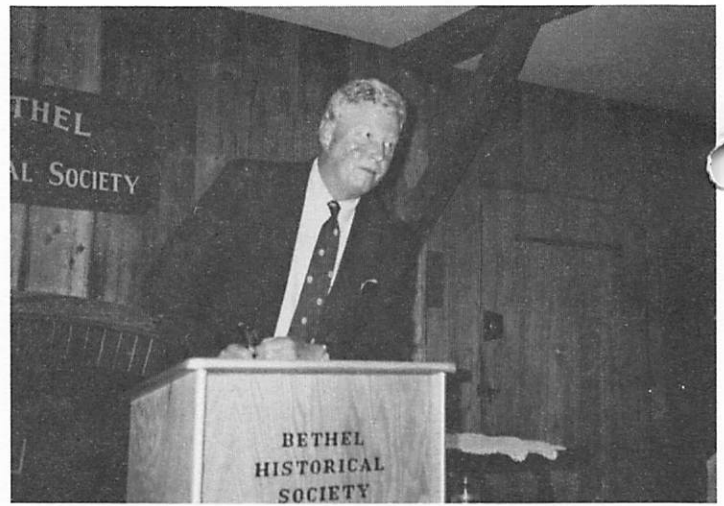
We built hanger space for three planes and put in gasoline facilities that summer and built a couple of toilets, kept the landing strip graded and I had Guy Swan Jr. on duty at the field most of the summer. An endless number of broken roots kept working up through the runway surface so that it had to be cleaned every day or two, but we developed a very good landing field. Things were going pretty well with the planing and shipping business with Wade Thurston still operating it, so Marie and I were talking about taking another vacation trip to Florida for three months or so, planning to leave sometime in December, but on November 26 early on Saturday evening all the buildings on the corn factory shop lot burned completely down which of course included the part in which we had our planing mill machinery.

We carefully laid our vacation plans away to be brought out some other winter as there was work to do. On the following Tuesday, I was able to close a trade with Fritz Tyler to buy the lot, as he did not plan to rebuild on it, for \$2000 which proved to be a very good deal as the lot was about two acres in area and had a spur track siding.

The ground was already frozen for about a foot in depth but we chopped down through this and put in the foundation for a new building right away. At the same time we built a temporary building out of cull lumber, large enough so that we could build the new planing mill building right inside it, and heated the whole thing with barrel stoves.

We built the new building entirely out of cement, cement blocks and steel with a steel roof, which would have been impossible during the winter without a temporary building.

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Professor Charles Clark of the University of New Hampshire was the fifth annual Hall Memorial Lecturer on June 10 during Incorporation Day festivities, celebrating the bicentenary of Bethel's incorporation. A leading historian of northern New England and a Maine native, Dr. Clark's lecture was titled "Privatism versus Communalism in the Eighteenth Century Towns of Northern New England."

BOOK REVIEW

WHITE MOUNTAIN HOTELS, INNS, AND TAVERNS.
By David Emerson. (Dover, New Hampshire: Arcadia, 1996.
Pp. 128. Paper \$16.99.)

Due to the presence and growing popularity of railroads in the 1850s and 1860s, White Mountains hotels and inns became increasingly more prevalent and imposing. By the turn of the century, the area became synonymous with elegance and gracious living as these impressive structures competed to see which could offer the visitor more in comfort and luxury. The rich and famous flocked here in great numbers; many of these establishments could boast at least one U.S. President or Gilded Age millionaire among its guests.

It was an "Age of Excess" as one historian has described it. David Emerson's book goes far to confirm this characterization and also remind us of how much has been lost. Few of the grand hotels are left today, victims of fire, neglect, the tyranny of the automobile, and hard and changing times. It is with just a bit of sadness that I gaze upon so many engaging photographs of lost buildings in this extraordinary part of New England.

David Emerson has done a yeoman's job of assembling outstanding photographs and writing brief captions to assist the reader in appreciating what has been lost. This book will be an important addition to anyone interested in grand architecture and in the colorful history of the White Mountains.

Regrettably, the book is marred somewhat by design defects. There are too many pages that are half blank and the organization of the book is a bit disjointed. In addition, several obvious and careless errors (such as Philbrick Farm instead of Philbrook) might have been eliminated with more careful proofing.

Nevertheless, this is an important book, particularly for those interested in social and architectural history with its vivid images, poignant reminders of what was once so much a part of life in this very special place. SRH

The date of the fire was also the end of our lease trade with Wade Thurston but it had accomplished its purpose and he has continued to work in our crew up to the present time (1959). The building that housed the planing machinery before the fire was of rather light construction so that damage to the machines was not total although pretty severe. I was able to hire the old Herrick Bros. Machine shop quarters in the building at the lower end of Main Street [1996 now the site of a parking lot] and we moved the damaged machinery over there and I put Floyd Thurston and Guy Swan to work rebuilding it. All the bearings in the machines had to be renewed as well as most of the gears and some broken parts.

We got the building done and machinery overhauled and set up so that we started planing again on February 23, 1947 just about 90 days after the fire.

If it can be said that any fire is a benefit to its victim, I might say that this one could be called that, as in the years following our rebuilding, our improved production and reduced cost of operation has more than absorbed our original loss.

The year 1947 had a few other significant happenings for our family; there were four grandchildren born during that year. James and Daniel Davis, twins, were born in May. Roger Leslie Dock was born in July and Richard Hamlin was born in November.

In December 1947, we brought out our vacation plans again and started for Florida. We came directly to St. Petersburg as we liked it best of all the places we had visited on our other trips.

During February 1947 Marie went back to the Bath Memorial Hospital again for an operation on the varicose veins in her legs; this was also under Dr. Harry Wilson's supervision and proved to be quite successful. The veins were cut and tied off to prevent clots from forming in them.

In August or September of that same year she went back for a third operation by Dr. Wilson in which she had some internal organs put back into proper place and fastened, and so far this has been the last major repair job that seemed necessary.

The years 1948 and 1949 followed very much the same pattern, and I believe 1950 could be also included. We kept very busy all summer long and each winter we took a three month vacation in Florida.

In the summer of 1947 Dick and I both got interested in seaplane flying and he took enough instructions so that he qualified for a seaplane license. During the late summer of 1948 or it might have been 1947, I am not quite sure, a floatplane was offered to us for sale by the Norway National Bank which was taking it over on a mortgage due them. This was a Aeronca Chief which had been converted to floats, a two place side by side plane with wheel controls. We bought it from the bank for \$1200 and it proved to be a good trade. We put a new steel propeller on it and had some other repair work done on it and kept it about 2 years. I got in practice work on this and qualified for my seaplane license in 1948.

This Aeronca Chief was a nice flying plane and very comfortable, but after a year or so we felt that we would like something a little larger with more horsepower and more room for the flights we took up around the lakes on fishing and hunting trips, so in the summer of 1950 we traded in the Aeronca Chief seaplane and the Aeronca Champion landplane with Harold Troxel at Portland for an Aeronca Sedan on floats, which was a four place airplane with metal wings and a 145 H.P. motor. We had to pay also money difference but this seemed to be just about the type and size we wanted, and it has been very satisfactory. Richard traded off his Piper Cruiser with Vivian Morrison of East Dixfield for a jeep in about the same year 1952 or 1953, as he reached the point where he hardly flew it at all. We still have the Aeronca Sedan Seaplane in 1959 while I

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(Reflections, continued from page 7)

am writing this and both of us fly it, also during the summer of 1958 I gave Peter, who was then 14 year old, a little instruction in it.

Two more grandchildren came into the family in the year 1950, Gretchen Marie Dock in July and Jeffrey Conrad Hamlin in October.

In the year 1951, we made quite a major change in our family business. During the years that we had been in business we had accumulated quite a lot of timberland and equipment and some working capital. With the help of Joe Pensirio and Ted Gonya of Rumford we worked out a plan to transfer the business to our three children over a period of the next eight years. We set up a corporation by the name of the L.E. Davis Lumber Company, Inc., and Marie and I transferred to it, all the timberland and logging equipment, the planing mill and machinery, lumber shed building, the apartment building on Spring Street [former Bethel Grange # 56 building, which earlier had been Pattee's Hall, razed in 1979], and \$10,000 for working capital.

The total valuation was about \$80,000 against which we took shares of stock at a par value of \$100 per share. This took place on July 2, 1951. Since the stock was all in my name I gave to each of the three children, also to Marie, 25 shares of stock each year until I had it all given away by the year 1958, except 1 share. After about the second year, Marie started giving her stock to them on a schedule, so that she had disposed of all of her stock except 1 share by the same year.

The three children and us were directors of the Corporation and drew salaries in proportion to the work for the corporation. In 1958, Marie and I both had qualified for Social Security pensions and were paid \$1200 per year each from the Corporation as a retirement pension.

Richard became the Corporation's President and General Manager in 1958, but he had taken over the actual operation of the planing mill in 1957. Under the present inheritance and gift tax laws any person can give to each of his or her natural heirs, property not in excess of \$3000 per year for an indefinite length of time without being liable for any tax, so we feel that we have accomplished quite a deal.

(to be continued in the next issue)



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